Dr. Cyril Wecht HD

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“The older people, the younger people, the professional people, people want to hear this. They are fascinated by it and they want to know the details, and these details include the things that blow the government’s case out of the water.” Dr. Cyril Wecht

One of America’s most prominent forensic pathologists who has consulted on numerous high profile cases and has been a long-term and passionate critic of the JFK autopsy and of the lone assassin findings of the Warren Commission. He is past president of both the American Academy of Forensic Sciences and the American College of Legal Medicine, and currently heads the board of trustees of the American Board of Legal Medicine. He served in Pittsburgh, Pa. at various times as County Commissioner, Allegheny County Coroner & Medical Examiner. He is the distinguished Professor of Pathology at Carlow University. High-profile cases he has worked on include Robert F. Kennedy, Sharon Tate, Brian Jones, The Symbionese Liberation Army shootout, John F. Kennedy, The Legionnaires’ Disease panic, Elvis Presley, Jon Benét Ramsey, Dr. Herman Tarnower (the Scarsdale diet guru), Danielle van Dam, Sunny von Bülow, the Branch Davidian incident, Vincent Foster, Laci Peterson and most recently Daniel and Anna Nicole Smith. During his career, Wecht performed more than 14,000 autopsies. He is a clinical professor at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine and an adjunct professor of law at Duquesne University. He served on the U.S. House of Representatives Select Committee on Assassinations, Forensic Pathology Panel, and he was a consultant for the 1991 film JFK. In 1982 he was the Democratic candidate for the U.S. Senate opposing John Heinz. Wecht fiercely contests the official government conclusion that a single bullet caused seven non-fatal wounds to JFK and Governor Connally and emerged in nearly pristine condition. In the fall of 2000, the Duquesne University School of Law established the Cyril H. Wecht Institute of Forensic Science and Law.

http://www.cyrilwecht.com

Dr. Wecht's conversation with Alan Dale may be heard here: http://www.jfkconversations.com

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our next speaker is america's most prominent forensic pathologist he's the only person in the room for whom an institute of forensic science and law is named it's an honor to introduce dr cyril wecht thank you thank you very much not to worry about the time i've already negotiated with gary aguilar and don thomas and randy robinson and i have their time cost me a few bucks i'm dealing with uh joan mellen a couple others i think we can go through a whole goddamn day right well despite my 40-year friendship with uh polycroft and lazar i still was only a lot of this brief time but i want to thank jerry and jim for having invited me for having put together this excellent program um a wonderful wonderful assemblage and all of you for coming i i don't know really if i'm going to be able to get into the slides i know that gary and and others will have all kinds of slides i want to talk to you as i've been thinking since i arrived yesterday about the importance of proving that lee harvey oswald was not a sole assassin you don't even have to go beyond that that's not our evidentiary burden was he a shooter although i point out without hesitation

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hesitation and always that he was not a shooter in my opinion but think of this some of you are lawyers and all of you think as lawyers when you're considering this case or you should you don't have an every answer evidence your murder the prosecution it is not your evidentiary burden to even prove a motive and it is not the defendant's burden even to show well who was it if not me keep in mind these presentations have been magnificent and they are and i i find them fascinating i've been interested in politics and some of you know i've been heavily involved in politics and myself um as an elected official a democratic candidate for u.s senate in 1982 stupidly running again h.j fi h.j hines and 100 million dollars um but i i know and i am fascinated by politics all of this is very interesting and keep pursuing it tenaciously aggressively bringing in all of these experts from whom we have heard about cuba and about all of these illicit relationships liaisons and surreptitious clandestine activities absolutely but do not be lulled do not be lord do not be seduced into what some people have come forth with well it was the cubans it was the mafia and without paying any attention to the shooter that somehow these people with all of their fantastic expertise their ability to manipulate the united states government and fool the entire world they selected lee harvey oswald as their shooter i mean just think of it in terms of the shooter think of it in terms of this murder scene a moving

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of this murder scene a moving target and you have to have somebody who knows what the hell he is doing the idea that some people have and for some people i suggest and i mean no disrespect and suggests no uh his secret motives and hidden agendas but uh you know some people want to have the cake and eat the cake well yes we can't bother without it was oswald but but uh we know who was really behind it to mafia do you think that the mafia first of all this is not their schtick this is not the way they kill people but let's just say that in this particular case they chose to do so you think they're going to go and they're going to find lee harvey oswalt as the shooter you think that the cubans having done all of this and worked it all out that they're going to go and select oswald or the cia joint chiefs of staff whoever you have at the highest level of government that this is going to be their man how about carlos the jackal maybe he was available how about somebody that knows what the hell they're doing so i want you to keep that in mind as you listen to gary aguilar and david manzik and randy robertson and don thomas and tink thompson and all of these people with the hard scientific evidence that's what it is about and so i just want to take this time with you limited as it is to review with you some of the basics to begin with and this is what i talk about i i don't keep track it could be a hundred thousand it could be a quarter of a million people people by the way i want you to know this those of you who do not have an opportunity to go and speak to groups and so on the people out there they're fascinated

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the people out there they're fascinated by this i don't care what the organization or the group is i just spoke last week to four groups and this week already to two the older people the younger people the professional people people want to hear this they are fascinated by it and they want to know the details and these details include the things that blow the government's case out of the water my is it a problem uh is it my burden i don't know and i don't say this in any kind of an egotistical fashion but as i think of a murderer as i think of a shooting as i think of how it was worked out the autopsy the investigation etc i think of it understandably you can appreciate as a forensic pathologist i don't know 52 years of active work in this field how many homicide cases i've done in my 000 autopsies that i've performed myself in the 39 000 additional autopsies that i've reviewed supervised or signed out but thousands and thousands have been homicized and testified um i don't know more than a thousand cases uh all over here and in several foreign countries you've got to get to the heart of the matter in terms of dealing with a question of whether or not the defendant committed the murder in this case we know we have a murder so we're beyond that and we know when it happened we're not dealing with o.j simpson and john bennett ramsey well when the hell did it happen with that eight nine hour delay here the delay should have endured to the benefit of the government if these imbeciles who did

the autopsy had bothered to pick up the telephone and talk with the doctors in dallas and learn about bullet wounds so to begin with we've got of course the illegal and removal of the body from dallas in violation of the laws there of dallas in texas dr

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of the laws there of dallas in texas dr earl rose my colleague a friend of mine a contemporary at that time was there pushed up shoved up against the wall hands on guns profanity and he the medical examiner was just totally ignored and threatened okay fine and then you go on to washington dc dr milton halpern who was the dean of forensic pathology at that time the chief medical examiner of new york city i know this from milton he had his bag packed he had already called some colleagues to ask him if they would be able to go and assist him not that he was cocky and complacent but he was the number one man who else would be called upon this is the president of the united states of america so we know that they call humes and boswell and i love to point this out to audiences not people like you but people who do not know the background and i i tell them i say if you represent that 20 30 if you are a microcosm of america that continues to believe in the war and commission report i want you to understand what you begin with you begin with the fact that humes and boswell had never done a single gunshot wound autopsy in their entire careers can you imagine that our president and i say to people republican democrat liberal conservative i don't give a damn what you are how does it how does this hit you are you insulted are you affronted are you amazed are you dumbfounded that you're you got a case here multiple gunshot wounds angle sequence trajectory distance correlation with conley's wounds that's a formidable task for three top-notch forensic pathologist working together and you've got these two guys that have never done a gunshot wound case and we know they missed the bullet wound in the throat we know that still today even among my colleagues my good friends and colleagues in forensic pathology who disagree with me the eight others on the friends pathology panel of the house select committee on assassinations who said yes um and in their criticisms

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who said yes um and in their criticisms they did not hesitate i want you to know that they were as critical and to some extent even less less gracious than i maybe in talking about the inexperience of those people but still somehow they came to the conclusion that well you know they got it right the shirt caller was frayed the tie was wrinkled and stained the suit jacket was old and and didn't fit the pants were short and the cuffs were frayed the shoes were scuffed but you know what he was a picture of sartorial elegance nevertheless okay and that's the metaphor i always think of in pointing this out and still today as i was saying that these people are arguing amongst themselves as we are where was the bullet hole in the head the knight of the autopsy the right exceptional protuberance the base of the skull the ramsey clark panel including one of uh one of them was my chief russell fischer where i trained in baltimore moved it up four inches yes ma'am jim d eugenio is speaking now in the breakout room right now jim is speaking so if anybody's heard this spiel before jim is an exciting speaker i'd like to be listening to him too let's go let's all go let's just all go down there that'll fix his little wagon the next morning they find out about the bullet hole and um then they got to put it all together and uh who knows what transpired they're after they looked at the zapruder film as i did with ting thompson that's when tink and i first met when he had the contract with life magazine and uh asked me if i would come to new york

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york and spend some time with him and looking over the zapruder film so they saw that and they were confronted with the problem in january hoover in 48 hours or less had already announced to the world he he knew what with these researchers with these phds with these historians with these academicians that have been talking to us our friends and colleagues uh in this program and other programs what they have worked on for years and years and preparing and writing their books and so on hoover in his intellectual brilliance uh he already had ascertained in less than 48 hours that it had nothing to do with anything the world is told that it is oswald end of the day that's it okay oswald's dead forget about it and so now what do you do when you

got the zapruder film and the test firing of the maniker kakano a piece of junk and i want you to know i've never fired a gun except two years in the air force when i was a doctor we went there and uh one day in our month-long training they took us from the classroom put a gun in our hands and said shoot i thought i was shooting at but i can tell you this that without any kind of exaggeration hundreds of long gun experts over the years have come up to me after these talks and told me about their experience many of the owners of that weapon it is the most inferior weapon of his genre which takes me back to the comments i made several weeks ago uh several weeks ago how about several minutes ago um when i talked about uh the selection of oswald and by the way lee we know you're such a goddamn crack shot we know that scores in the marines they were just you know because they knew that you were kind of a lefty and they downgraded you we knew that you were really an a double plus shooter okay and by the way you're so damn good that we don't want to make it easy and give you a good weapon we want you to use this manicure carcano as the assassination weapon think about that okay so now they had a

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think about that okay so now they had a problem enter arlen specter who parenthetically i might say in later years and i hope you won't kick me out of our little uh critic researcher community when i tell you that became friends with spectre and even as a democrat the first time in my life publicly endorsed a republican specter in 2004 and again in 2010 when he ran as a democrat but specter came up with a single bullet theory and you got to give him credit you know i mean for coming up with some way to extricate them from that seemingly impossible incongruous scenario how do you put together the test firing and that gives birth to the single bullet theory that is the essence of this case with all due respect to the brilliance of all of you especially those who have dedicated your lives to research and so on you've got to understand that it is necessary it is essential legally it is absolutely critical in terms of selling this to the american public and one day and i used to think it would happen in my lifetime i know now it won't but maybe in the lifetimes of those of you who are younger and something down the road we can only hope for excavation whatever it will be some kind of disclosure but unless you can convince and prove the point to begin with that oswald was not the shooter you've got a difficult time uh you can talk about co-conspirators you can talk about accessories before and after the murder but how's about who did the murder and that brings us back then to that single bullet theory which is absolutely absurd and every time i make this presentation i call up two

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make this presentation i call up two people from the audience i have them sit uh kennedy and conley and i show that trajectory with the begin with we've got the bullet moving upward 11 and a half degrees unanimously agreed to by the forensic pathology panel and the radiology panel of the house committee unanimously well how do you deal with that if you have a bullet being fired from the six floor southeast corner window the answer of my colleagues well what if kennedy were bent over i said yeah that's right he was tying his shoelace or he was scratching the coin right well how about the goddamn the pruder film was he bent over and i love the show john connolly where is the stetson where is it located here and where is he looking and you can see that frame you can count the fingers on his hand at that point that man has been shot through the chest the ribs the fifth rib anteriorly four inches has been destroyed the right lung has been perforated the bullet has exited from below the level of the nipple after moving upward eleven and a half degrees through kennedy and then downward left forward and forward it swerves in midair comes back 18 20 inches slams into conley behind the right armpit proceeds at a downward angle of 23 degrees x's below the level of the nipple hooks up and around gets the distal end of the radius and the wrist exits from the wrist reenters the left thigh on friday night of the autopsy where was the stretcher bullet from from kennedy's back you'll have this you don't have to be a doctor that the patient can really lay on the stretcher and pressure applied to the front of his chest force the bullets back out through the same channel oh i just love that the next morning when they learned about the bullet hole in the front of the neck in which they had thought to be a tracheostomy the night before the bullet now was from the front of his clothing that tomlinson found back at parkland hospital five months later under the single bullet theory

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later under the single bullet theory the bullet has been rejuvenated reinvigorated and it has now moved on and is now from conley's left thigh these are the things that you hammer and point out and then you move on from there the government's own experiment somebody there and maybe one of my fellow researchers knows who it was i don't someone had the sense of professionalism to say hey and can a bullet do that let's get another moniker carcano let's get a bunch of 6.5 millimeter copper jacket lead core military ammunition and let's get three sets of targets shooting the cotton wadding so the bullet um doesn't in any way become deformed you just want to look and see what a bullet looks like after being fired then goat cadavers breaking one rib to simulate conley's rib fracture human cadavers shooting through the radius to simulate connelly's wrist fracture that one slide and i hope gary had i have it but i i'm not going to be able to get to that slide maybe gary has it he has more slides than carter has a little liverpool's phil's with the old expression that shows you how old i am you never heard that when younger folks carter's a little bit um that i i love to tell audiences if if god said to me wrecked every single thing you own on the kennedy assassination we are taking from you but you can keep one thing and i mean one thing not a collection of things but one thing that's the slide did i keep that slide the government then selected from those three representative categories of experimental gun shootings the bullet that went into cotton wadding and you'll see the base shows the same deformity from the impact of the firing mechanism then the bullet that broke the rib of a goat and then the bullet that broke a radius in a

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the bullet that broke a radius in a human cadaver and shows the typical mushrooming peeling back effect that you see when bullets strike bones that is their experiment and i say to audiences making them the jury folks you've now heard the case and so on and i'm the prosecutor and i'm summing up i want to remind you that my distinguished colleague representing this defendant oswald here making fun of it and calling it the magic bullet theory i just want to remind you what it is and he's going to show that slide and he's going to show you that if a bullet that breaks a rib can look like this and a bullet that breaks a radius can look like this both deformed and then i come back to the hero of the single boulder theory commission exhibit 399 i say is there any doubt in your mind that a bullet that breaks both a rib and a radius can look like this and the audience is that's that's the case so keep that in mind and think about these things you'll have wonderful discussions from my learned colleagues that are going to follow now and give you more of the scientific background i want to make it clear that there are differences amongst us as there are amongst you you know i i'm not going to bet my life that the shooters i i believe one was from the rear and i don't think it was oswald and i believe one was from the grassy knoll behind to pick a fence that's my take um others have a different take and i think a couple people think maybe there were more than two shooters it doesn't make any difference abinicio our burden is to show our formidable task is to prove that lee harvey oswald could not have been a single shooter keep that in mind by all means continue to pursue every other aspect of

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continue to pursue every other aspect of this case but keep in mind if this were a murder case that we were dealing with today that you don't really get to the question you don't have the opportunity to bring in all of these outliers you don't have the opportunity to cast your net wide and pull all of these ultra right wing militaristic people in mind who were responsible for this in our government we know that but you've got to first show that this is not oswald and that the warren commission reports commission commission's report is erroneous and don't lose sight of that and don't reach the point that you become so enamored so enchanted so lured and intellectually fascinated by all of the discussions which i emphasize are important and cuba and cia and and the whole shtick don't forget that if you are saying well somehow this all worked out but oswald was the shooter and there are people amongst us who have pursued that there are people who believe that um or who would like to sell that you just can't have that because i can tell you as a forensic pathologist as a

lawyer i can tell you you're not going to get anywhere with that let me take a few remaining minutes i know this is on jfk in my mind the robert f kennedy's host assassination is related do i believe it was exactly the same shooters do i believe

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exactly the same shooters do i believe it was exactly the same coterie of diabolical individuals who i like to say when they hear the star-spangled banner and they see the flag waving they hear and see something more and different than us they are the super patriots they know what is good for america and remember at that time not only did they know as they continue to know their beliefs but at that time they ran rampant okay in making these decisions and the overthrows of government all around the world we know all of that those people were still in play with bobby kennedy and i've always said and have always believed that the reason for the assassination of john kennedy was yes indeed um what was extant at that time in terms of the political agenda what was on the menu but it wasn't something that could be dealt with and taken care of in their minds at that time or in the foreseeable future they were looking at five more years of john and then eight years of bobby and bobby having won that democratic primary in california that night in june 68 the democratic nomination was his and those people knew more than we they were better politicians than us they knew and it would have definitely come to pass that bobby would have been elected you remember the narrow margin by which hubert humphrey lost and by the way he lost probably because of people like us who said god damn it hubert why did you come out against johnson on the vietnam war and on this and that those are the people not the republicans who probably defeated hubert humphrey and davis nixon but those people would not have abandoned robert kennedy he would have been our next president

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he would have been our next president and indeed the people back in 63 they knew they were looking at 13 more years of that kind of political agenda nationally and internationally 13 years that's a lifetime in the political evolution of a country a lifetime this isn't the ball game wait until the third period of hockey the second half of the football or basketball game they knew that for 13 years they could not sit back there was only one way to deal with it and now they've got bobby kennedy and i just bring you this in conclusion from a forensic scientific standpoint because a lot of people don't know this and what i tell you however is not a secret it's not confidential and it is not arguable it is incontrovertible when tom the gucci called me three four o'clock in the morning my dear friend who remains such today a top-notch forensic pathologist to tell me that bobby kennedy had been shot and was dead or was going to be declared dead he didn't call me to ask me how to do an autopsy tom didn't need advice for me on that but he wanted to know how he could prevent them from taking bobby kennedy's body away from his jurisdiction because tom and i had become friends as young men at the american academy of forensic sciences he knew of my criticisms of dallas and especially about the removal of the president's body to begin that horrible scenario and among the suggestions that i made to tom getting in touch with somebody close to the kennedy family i suggested pierre salinger as a californian and the key point i made to tom tom you reach out you you act before they do and you extend the invitation to the government to have their people there to be

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there to be observers as you do the autopsy and tom reached out and they sent three board-certified military forensic pathologists from the armed forces institute of pathology used to be right here on campus at walter reed and they attended so i want you to know that there is unanimity of opinion among tom the most detailed medical legal autopsy i have ever read anywhere i think the only thing he forgot to measure was how long were the toenails a fantastic autopsy report tom the gucci six board certified forensic pathologist on his staff three board certified military forensic pathologist two civilian board certified for anthropologists william eckert now deceased and me and so i ask audiences always i'd love to do this and i'll bet you i have easily over a hundred thousand people over the years 45 years now what was the distance of sirhan surhan when he shot bobby kennedy and i give them the scenario the ambassador hotel going out through the kitchen and so on

what was the distance two feet five feet eight feet ten feet six feet fifteen feet and so on and i just love it and i say okay what if i tell you that among all the forensic pathologists whom i have just enumerated and counted for you and this was then confirmed by the criminalist ballistics people which is what we do you take that same weapon that same ammunition you use pigskin you can use white paper pigskin is ideal and you shoot to determine the distance from which the shot was fired what if i tell you that without any disagreement at all it was determined that the shot that killed bobby kennedy which by the way also had a slightly forward trajectory entering just behind and above the right ear and moving slightly forward as he was moving walking towards her hand that that shot the fatal shot

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the fatal shot that killed bobby kennedy was fired one to one and a half inches away from his head that is a fact how come you don't know that because it never came out in the trial tom gave this testimony and the grand jury and at the trial the prosecution obviously they weren't going to touch this with the proverbial 10-foot pole the defense grant cooper a experienced defense attorney something interesting to think about too not some court-appointed novice he never never consulted a forensic pathologist a ballistic expert there was no such expert the only forensic scientific evidence in that case for the defense was from a forensic psychiatrist was sir ham mentally competent so what i have just told you never emerged from the trial and to this day despite the efforts of so many people who have been working hard on this and who continue to do so um that case can't be reopened and i suggest to you the reason for fitting this into my uh brief discussion is not uh just to give you something more to think about but in a in a an unrelated sense but in a very related sense i think the same forces are responsible and just keep that in mind i'm not suggesting that you assume that burden but keep it in mind broaden your vision look at this with an even greater scope think about what went on in america with the assassinations of john f kennedy robert f kennedy and martin luther king another case um story that the government gave us by james earl ray this punk hoodlum i don't have time to get into that that it is so strikingly similar to oswald and after uh shooting um king and he decides to

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um king and he decides to give the government a little head start he wants to have the game to be fair so he leaves the rifle why take it with him with his fingerprints um and then he's on to canada with documents and papers it would make double 07 green with envy and so on that's what these assassinations were about and that's why we who continue to be interested who are knowledgeable who have worked on this some people devoted a major part of their lives to this excellent books that have been written you got to you got to make americans understand not only that gee we don't accept the war and commission report but why don't you accept it and then beyond that what was it all about because one day if this case is ever to be reopened and if the truth is ever to be disclosed then it is only going to come about when we can prove and show that there was more than one shooter don't even have to get to the question that was oswald one of the shooter i'll say to honestly you want oswald as a shooter here's oswald i give them to you i don't believe it but here but let's go on to the second shooter because you know and you don't have to be alan dershowitz or legal scholar to know that once you got two people involved in the planning and execution or cover-up of a felony crime then you've got a co-conspirator and the case must be reopened that's all you need that's all you need you don't have to bring in anything at all about anybody else i thank you i commend you and look forward to seeing you again you

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